

2010 Season Report

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Fire Season Overview

The 2010 wildfire season was a successful learning experience for everyone on the UFRA Wildland Internship crew. The crew continued to gain depth and experience throughout the season and improve as a cohesive unit. Hard work, commitment and dedication enabled UFRA to successfully accomplish a variety of fuels reduction projects in Utah, and to help with wildfire suppression efforts on incidents in Utah, Colorado, and Idaho.

New Beginnings

Big changes to the UFRA program in 2010 were the initiation of the crew's bid for type 1 status, including the reorganization of crew supervision and the addition of a third permanent full time squad boss position. These changes added valuable depth to the crew and enabled UFRA to take on more challenging and complex assignments.

SlowStart

The 2010 Eastern Great Basin wildfire season started out a little slower than average. However, we stayed busy during the first half of the season with 6 National Fire Plan fuels reduction projects in Utah, and 8 wildfires in Utah, Colorado, and Idaho.



Meadno Fire June 2010

These fires burned in a variety of fuel types and offered many training opportunities for UFRA crewmembers.

First Dispatch

The first dispatch came on June 19th. It was an extended attack assignment to the Water Creek Fire located on the Roan Plateau outside of Rifle Colorado.



View from the Roam Plateau

At 10,000 feet , the plateau doesn't get a lot of fire. Officials took advantage of the natural start and allowed the fire to burn to improve wildlife habitat. UFRA was lucky enough to be assigned to a large spot fire on a slope across the creek from the main fire where full suppression was the order. The Water Creek Fire allowed our young crew to build cohesion, practice Standard Operating Procedures and introduce rookie firefighters to the fire environment.



Max-Com May

Keep on Rolling

Once UFRA's efforts were no longer needed on the Water Creek Fire, the crew was re-assigned to another wildfire in the region. The Park Dale Canyon Fire near the scenic Royal Gorge of Colorado was sparked by a tourist train that runs through the gorge. High winds and high temperatures drove the fire through a rural development, destroying a few residences before initial attack forces and cooperating weather checked its growth.



Park Dale Canyon Fire

We stayed busy for 3 shifts ensuring that the Pinion-Juniper had no chance to rekindle and then received our third dispatch of the tour, re-assignment to the Medano fire in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of south central Colorado.



Great Sand Dunes National Park

The Medano fire started in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and burned into the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of the San Isabel National Forest. Here, like the Water Creek, UFRA again took part in a fire being managed for multiple objectives, and, again we found ourselves at high elevation, ten thousand feet plus.



Sangre de Cristo Mountains

With all of its similarities to the Water Creek, our assignment on the Madono was completely different. We changed from direct attack to indirect line prep on a ridge 3 miles south of the fire.



Madono Indirect Line Location

Challenged by thunder, wind, rain showers and mosquitoes, UFRA punched-in over a mile of indirect saw line and hand line through mixed conifer. Having completed our assignment after five shifts, the Colorado type II incident

management team thanked us and released us from their fire. Our time was short, and fire scarce, we were not reassigned.

The drive back to Draper climbed over Independence pass where we captured the season's crew photo.



UFRA 2010 at Independence Pass

We passed Grand Junction and hiked the South Canyon Fire memorial line and paid respect to the firefighters who died there. After running out of drive time, we camped out on the edge of the San Rafael Swell before arriving at base thus completing our first roll of the season.

UFRA's next fire assignment was an initial attack just up the road from Draper.



Spring Training

We were just starting a second round of fitness training when the phone rang. We rallied back to the crummies and headed north on I-15 to Centerville and the Rick's fire. There, crews, engines, helicopters and air tankers were working the type III fire. Our assignment was up the left flank. We leapfrogged squads who had anchored and continued up the steep rocky terrain through oak brush, rolling rocks and rattlesnakes. We worked that first shift well into the night than carefully picked our way down the steep loose hillside. Two more days of mop-up and we were released.

Our next assignment was protecting the Salt Lake air shed on the Tabby II Fire, a lightning strike on Stansbury Island, west of Salt Lake City.



Stansbury Island and The Great Salt Lake

Weather cooperated and, with a helicopter shuttle, blivets, and backpack pumps, it took only one shift to put this 40 acre fire to bed.

Shortly after of the Tabby II, we were dispatched to the Lookout Mountain Fire near Stanley, Idaho. A remote lightning strike on the Sawtooth National Forest, the Lookout Fire required a long crew shuttle. We parked our vehicles at the Stanley airstrip and prepared for spike.



Lookout Mountain Spike Camp

UFRA worked 5 operational shifts in timber with one other crew and some miscellaneous engine and helitack personnel before being released from the Lookout Fire.



Interagency suppression on the Lookout Mountain

We returned to Draper but were heading back to Idaho the following day, this time to southeast Idaho and the Rooster Rock Fire.

Upon our arrival, the Rooster Rock Fire was actively burning in Pinion and Juniper with a cured grass understory and being driven by winds from impending thunder storms. The type III team managing the fire had dozer line in place and our assignment was to split the crew and burn toward each other.



Rooster Rock Fire Front

During the firing operation the thunder cell and associated sporadic winds moved over and forced the crew into the black. The fire made a significant run before accompanying rain knocked it down. The Rooster Rock proved a great learning experience as crewmembers witnessed how rapidly a wind-driven fire can move through grass and brush fuel types.



Rooster Rock Chute

Second Half

UFRA started the second half of the fire season with the Twitchell Canyon fire on the Fish Lake National Forest. Here Forest officials took advantage of unusually cool wet summer conditions and allowed a July 20th lightning strike to burn on in order to meet natural resource objectives.



Twitchell Fuels

Decades of fire suppression had allowed sub-alpine fir and mixed conifer to crowd out acres of aspen; prime wildlife habitat.



Twitchell Wildlife

The weather turned hotter and dryer in September and the low intensity fire of the previous months presented challenging conditions for suppression forces as the fire made big runs that threatened structures, private land and interstate freeways.



Holding on the Twitchell

UFRA eventually worked 31 shifts over 3 tours, successfully completing assignments on every division and providing incident management teams with personnel for overhead assignments.

The Twitchell Canyon Fire was interesting in its display of extreme fire behavior in both low elevation desert fuel types and in high elevation sub-alpine fir environments.



Tusher Mountains

Crewmembers took part in implementing many different strategies and tactics to meet the forest's multiple management objectives

throughout the duration of the fire including: indirect line prep miles from the fire, direct attack, spike-out at 10,000 feet with temperatures in the 20s and winds over 40 miles per hour, firing out and holding, plumbing hose lays, helicopter shuttles, and sling missions to name a few.



Sling Mission

Team Flexibility

The flexibility of the UFRA team; Dromedary Peak, Twin Peaks and UFRA, enabled a smooth transition when four of UFRA 2010's original crewmembers returned to school in the last week of August. UFRA picked up four crewmen while passing through Draper traveling to Cascade, Idaho and the Hurd fire.



Lake Cascade

On our arrival at the Hurd fire, a Type II incident management team was in the process of taking responsibility for the fire from the forest and tactics were on hold while the forest and the team discussed objectives and developed a strategy for the fire. We took this opportunity to help the team set up their incident command post, scout the land and learn from crews that had worked the fire before the transition.



Hurd Fire

The fire's proximity to numerous cabins, homes and the Tamarack Resort near Lake Cascade made clear that this fire burning in sub-alpine fir would require full suppression.



Hurd Fire Air Support

We gladly accepted the teams challenge to attack an active flank from a ridge top to the west of the fire. This tactic in the terrain and fuels required careful analysis and close coordination with adjacent forces and team overhead to ensure safety and to increase chances for success.



Up and out of the Hurd

Once satisfied with the plan, we engaged the fire using direct attack, pump and hose, natural barriers and air support. After a couple of restarts and line relocations due to fire activity,

we were able to contain our portion of the fire and were released after our 14th day of the tour.

Return to the Twitchell

After a couple days of Rest and Recovery, we received our second call to the Twitchell.



Gold Smelter

In the time that had passed since our departure, the fire had doubled in size with a significant run into Fish Creek. We were sent in to corral a portion of the fire that was threatening private property including modern structures, and historic mines.



Twitchell Fire Growth

We saw extreme fire behavior as we worked with other crews and air resources until the forest was satisfied that the private property was no longer threatened and we were released on our 13th day. Our disappointment of coming up just one day short of the second full tour of the season was short lived however as we received our third call to the Twitchell after just one day at home. Again the weather had changed and the fire was now threatening not only the same private property as before, but also Interstate 70

Our third roll to the Twitchell proved to be quite a mix of tactical assignments ranging from keeping the fire from reaching the freeway to chipping fuels that had been cut during indirect road prep.

It was now well into September, but the weather had yet to change back to the cool moist conditions that had encouraged the forest to let the fire burn.



Twitchell Smoke

Interstate 70 had twice been shut down and the adjacent communities' patience and tolerance for smoke was wearing thin. After reaching 40,000 acres the forest was satisfied with the fire's benefits. The team now managing the fire was looking to close the book on the Twitchell and held on to us until we timed out, it was our second full tour of the season.



Salt Lake Desert

After the mandatory days off following the Twitchell, the weather took a change and became cooler and wetter.

We were pleasantly surprised to get a call for a fire in the desert west of Salt Lake. The 8 mile was the result of an accident involving an exploding camp stove fuel bottle. It spread quickly in the dried grass and burned over 100 acres of pinion-juniper before a variety of suppression forces contained the spread.



Single Engine Air Tanker

We ended up with five shifts on the 8 mile before the local unit was comfortable that there was absolutely no chance for rekindle. The 8 mile was to be the last fire for the UFRA crew for the 2010 season.



Throughout the season UFRA was tasked with a variety of assignments providing opportunity and practical experience in multiple areas including; firing operations, plumbing hose lays, constructing hot line, directing aircraft, and tree felling. UFRA crewmembers performed at the high level the UFRA crew has come to demand. In the end, 2010 was a safe fire season and a great learning experience for all members of the crew.

UFRA appreciates the hard work and dedication of its original 2010 crewmembers and that of all detailers who filled in for students in the last half of the season. We are also grateful for the support of the State of Utah, the Department of Natural Resources and the Division of Forestry Fire and State Lands.

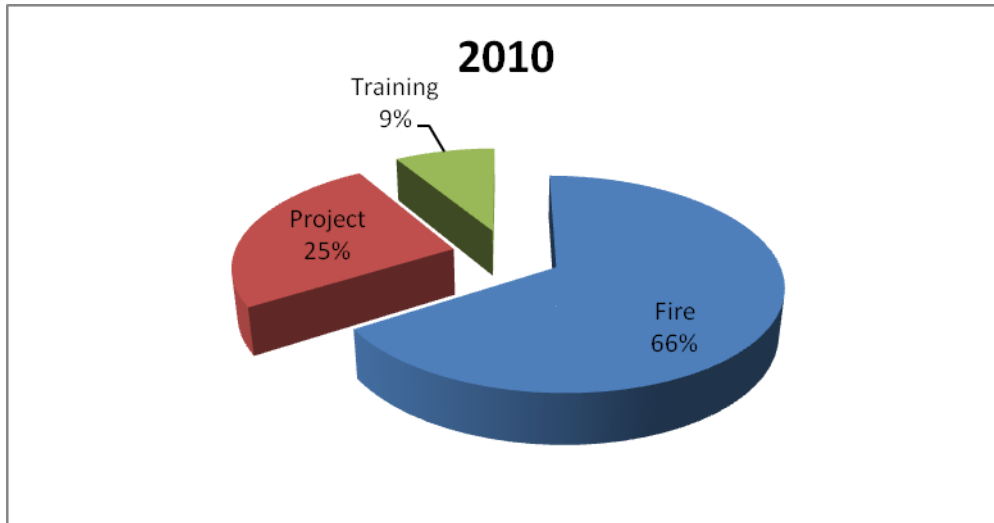
We wish all a well deserved break and encourage a safe, healthy and fitness filled winter.



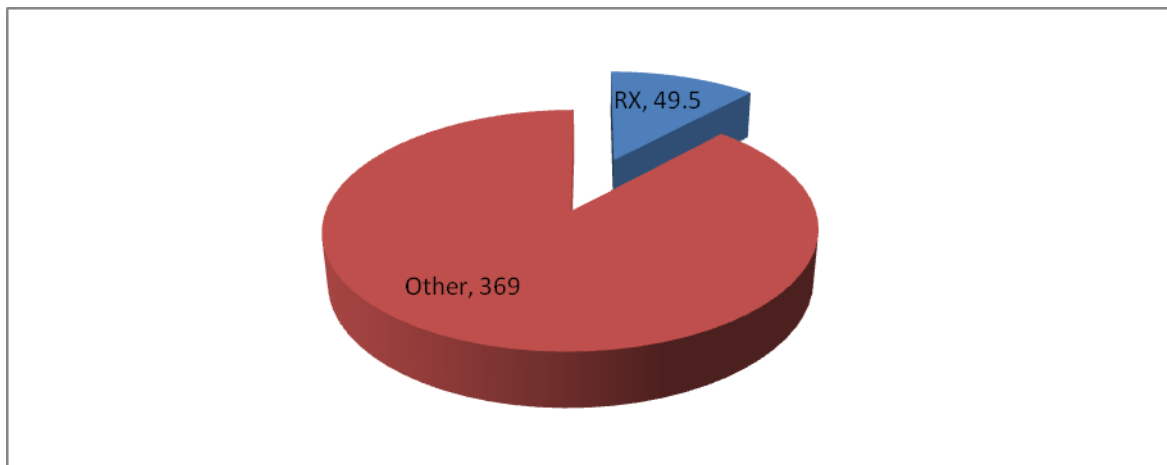
Fire Assignment Summary

The 2010 fire season provided excellent experiences for the crewmembers of UFRA. The following tables are a breakdown of how time was spent during the summer of 2010 from May 3rd to October 31st.

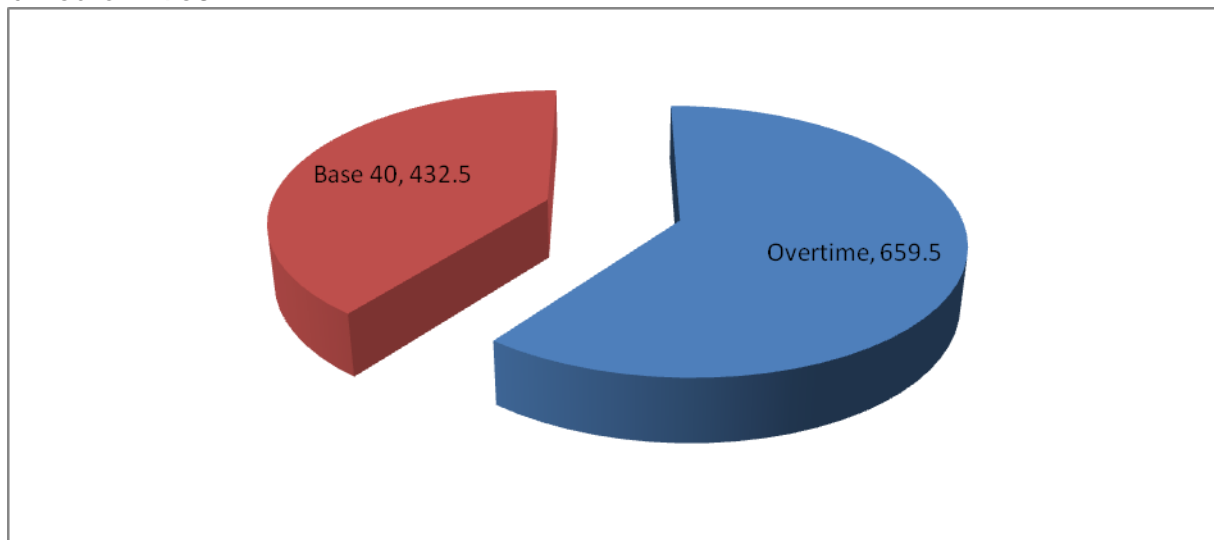
All time totals = 1654.5 hours



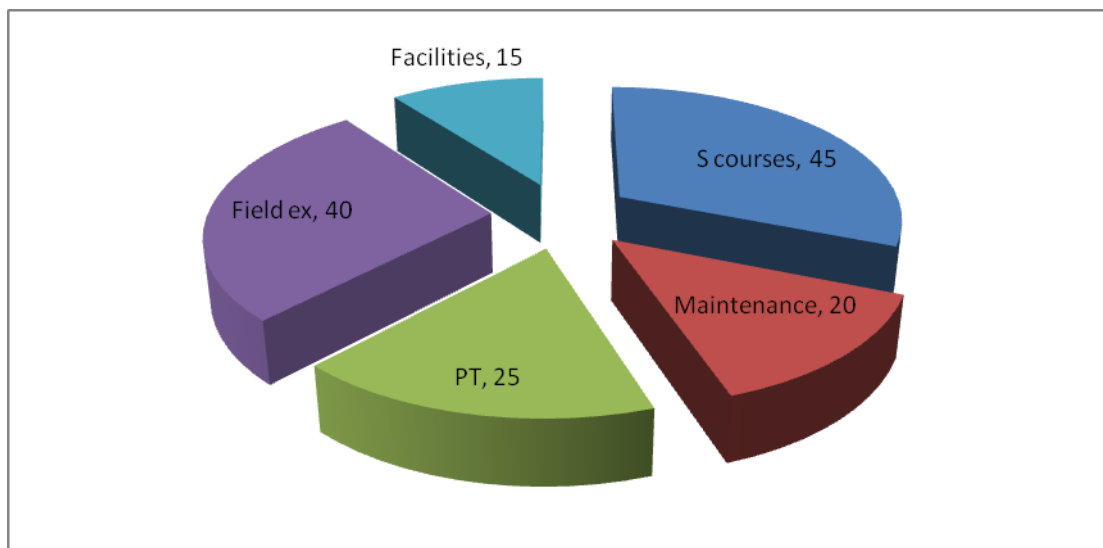
Project Time total = 418.5 hours



Fire hour total = 1092
Hazard hours = 968



Training total = 144 hours



Fire Table

This table illustrates the number of fires in which UFRA engaged, the multiple complexity levels and fuel types involved, and the dates for each assignment.

Incident Dates	State	Risk Type	Fuel Type	Fire Size	Incident Name
6/19-6/21	CO	III	2,5,10	E	Water Creek
6/22 – 6/24	CO	III	6	E	Parkdale Canyon
6/25 – 6/28	CO	II	8,10	F	Medano
7/8 – 7/10	UT	III	6	C	Ricks
7/26	UT	III	2	C	Tabby 2
8/1-8/5	ID	IV	8,10	C	Lookout Mountain
8/6 - 8/9	ID	III	1,2,6	G	Rooster Rock
8/16-8/18	UT	III	2,4,6,8,10	F	Twitchell Canyon
8/19 – 8/22	UT	IV	6,8	C	Meadow Creek
8/23-8/29	ID	II	2,10	F	Hurd
9/1-9/13	UT	II	2,4,6,8,10	G	Twitchell Canyon
9/16-9/29	UT	II	2,4,6,8,10	G	Twitchell Canyon
10/3-10/7	UT	III	1,2,6	F	8 Mile

Project Work Summary



When not suppressing wildfires, UFRA stays busy on National Fire Plan projects throughout the state of Utah. The work varies but the majority consists of fuels reduction projects encompassing various fuel types.

After completing the pre-season critical training, we started project work on May 18th with a fuels mitigation project in Park City. We spent a total of 39 days on projects during the 2010 fire season including 8 days burning slash piles and reducing hazardous fuels from the forest understory adjacent to homes. We burned over 100 piles built the previous season, and constructed approximately 100 more.



Project work also included tree felling to reduce the hazardous fuels surrounding a Boy Scout camp in the Uinta Mountains of northern Utah. Most of the lodge pole pines in this area had succumbed to the mountain pine beetle. The crew fell, bucked and limbed standing dead timber, and constructed slash piles to be burned in the spring.

UFRA's largest project of the season was a 16 acre parcel surrounding a picnic area east of Cedar City. Here the objective was to reduce fuels and drop any hazard trees. The felled timber was cut and piled for fire wood; the limbs and smaller trees were removed from the understory and stacked into slash piles for spring burning.

Project work provided many training opportunities for our sawyers and offered other opportunities for crewmembers to learn about firing operations.

The 2010 season proved a great success for projects and fires for the UFRA Crew.



Season Data Summary

Number of days the crew was available:	180
Number of days committed to incidents:	76
Number of days in training:	9
Number of 14-day assignments:	2
Number of days paid R & R:	3
Number of days on type I/II incidents:	38
Number of days on type III/IV/V incidents:	38
Number of days in travel status:	11
Number of crew helicopter flights:	8
Number of Career personnel:	4
Number of vacant career positions:	1
Number of days on Project:	39
Number of vehicle accidents:	0
FFT1/ICT5 task books completed:	1
CRWB task books completed:	0
HECM task books completed:	2

2010 UFRA Crew

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Duration</u>
Wade Snyder	Crew Boss	Permanent
Scott Nielson	Assistant Crew Boss	Permanent
James Pummel	Squad Boss	Permanent
Davis Oatway	Squad Boss	Permanent
Robert Reedy	Squad Boss	5/3-8/23
Nate Barrons	Squad Boss	8/23-10/29
Ted Sneed	Lead Crewmember	Full Season
Kevin Frank	Lead Crewmember	Full Season
Nick Flemmer	Lead Crewmember	5/3-8/23
Matthew Schutt	Sawyer	Full Season
Paul Harrie	Sawyer	5/3-10/1
Klark Brinkerhoff	Sawyer	Full Season
Dallas McQuillan	Sawyer	Full Season
David Grazzini	Sawyer	Full Season
Brett Bowthorpe	Sawyer	5/3-8/29
Cameron Shaughnessy	Sawyer	8/23-10/29
Jaxon Melhoff	Sawyer	5/3-8/23
Travis Wright	Sawyer	5/3-7/15
Ryan Hyland	Crewmember	Full Season
Mario Giacobassi	Crewmember	Full Season
Payden Thompson	Crewmember	Full Season
Ashley Nelson	Crewmember	Full Season
Chase Bowen	Crewmember	8/6-10/29
Cameron Posernick	Crewmember	8/23-9/29

2010 UFRA Detailers

Thank you to all the personnel who came from other crews and stepped up to help fill open positions on UFRA enabling the crew to stay available for the duration of fire season.

- Brett Bowthorpe: Uinta-Wasatch Cache National Forest, Spanish Fork District.
- Nate Barrons: Dromedary Peak Fuels Module
- Cameron Shaughnessy: Dromedary Peak Fuels Module
- Chase Bowen: Dromedary Peak Fuels Module
- Cameron Posernick: Dromedary Peak Fuels Module

2010 UFRA Crew Photograph



Back row (left to right): Wade Snyder, James Pummel, Ashley Nelson, Mario Giacobassi, Payden Thompson, Ryan Hyland, Cameron Posernick, Chase Bowen, Ted Sneed, Davis Oatway.
Front row (left to right): Matt Schutt, Paul Harrie, Clark Brinkerhoff, Dallas McQuillan, David Grazzini, Cameron Shaughnessy, Kevin Frank.

Crewmembers not in this photograph: Scott Nielson, Nate Barrons.

Photograph taken on Signal Peak in the Tusher Mountains of Utah, 10,365 ft. elevation, Twitchell Canyon Fire (3rd trip)

